

2.11 Truck Loading Facility

USAG-AK has proposed to construct a ten-bay truck loading and unloading facility and associated support buildings and facilities (Figure 17). The facility will enable the installation to comply with Army Strategic Mobility Program requirements and increase mobilization speed. It will consist of ten multilevel loading docks and ramps, an operations support building, and supporting facilities like water, sewage, parking, electricity, etc. The undertaking will require substantial vegetation clearing and earthwork. This project is located on map quadrangle FAI D2, T. 1 S, R. 1 W., Section 20.



Figure 17. Location of proposed truck loading facility

Survey and Inventory

In May 2005 the proposed facility site was investigated by a crew of two archaeologists employed by the Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands (CEMML, Colorado State University). The crew pedestrian surveyed the project area, which is divided into a north section and a south section by Chippewa Road. No National Register eligible cultural resources were found within the project area.

In addition to pedestrian transects, one 40cm x 40cm shovel test was excavated in the northern section of the project area. The shovel test did not contain any cultural material. No shovel tests were excavated in the southern section of the project area. The vegetation throughout the entire area proposed for a truck loading facility consists of a black spruce forest with occasional birch and alder trees. Ground cover consists mainly of various mosses as well as horsetail and rose.

The northern section of the project area has numerous foot trails and several unmaintained dirt roads. A portion of the project area has previously been developed as an obstacle course for troop training. The remains of an 'expedient structure' were also located during survey and consisted of fallen trees stacked against several adjacent trees to form a small enclosure. Several pieces of unexploded ordinance (UXO) were found in the area north of Chippewa Road in addition to coils of razor wire.

The southern section of the project area also has foot trails and several unmaintained dirt roads. A portion of the project area south of Chippewa Road has been cleared and now has a gravel pad and plywood-type structures used for troop training. The southern section of the project area was much more disturbed than the northern portion. Disturbance included bulldozer berms and foxholes, as well as a large amount of trash, an abandoned vehicle and other military debris. UXO were also present in this portion of the project area.

The location was inspected visually for artifacts and disturbance. Sub-surface testing was undertaken randomly in one location in the northern portion of the project area, as determined by the supervising archaeologist based on the surface disturbance and debris in the area. The shovel test was approximately 40cm x 40cm, and was screened through ¼" hardware cloth.

Cultural Resources

Historical records indicate that several homesteads may have been located in the survey area, but military uses have left no signs of preexisting structures (Price 2002). No signs of other historic properties or sites were found either.

Results

No cultural resources were identified by visual inspection or shovel testing within the project area. One shovel test pit was dug along a transect on the north side of the road. It was dug to 80 cm deep in a black spruce-forested area west of the obstacle course. The test pit revealed no artifacts, just fine wet sands and silt.

Much of the area south of the road has been more heavily disturbed by military training features and activities. All other previously recorded archaeological sites or historic properties fall outside of the proposed project area. USAG-AK determined that no historic properties will be affected by the proposed project.